Shoujo Sense
Usotoki Rhetoric
by Miyako Ritsu
Chapter 14
3
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# Chapter 14
# 第十四話

IS THIS TRUE...
OKAY!
KANOKO-KUN, PUT THAT UNHINGED DOOR HERE BENEATH SHINAKO-SAN.
SHI-NAKO-SAN!
ARE THERE REALLY TWO "SHINAKOS"?

SHE'S FINE. SHE'S STILL BREATHING. LET'S GET HER TO THE CAR, QUICKLY.
I HAVE TO TREAT HER IN THE CLINIC. IT'S AT THE HOSPITAL IN MARUI.
THE CAR IS WAITING BY THE STAIRS.
KANOKO-KUN, OPEN ALL THE DOORS LEADING OUTSIDE.
WE'LL CARRY SHINAKO-SAN. CALL SHIBATA-SAN TOO.
SHINA-KO...
SHINAKO...!!
ばっ
SFX: LEAP
STOP!!
DID YOU DO THIS?!
SHI-NAKO...
PLEASE!

PLEASE SAVE HER..!!
PLEASE.
SHE LOST SO MUCH BLOOD.
I've finally heard her
not tell a lie.
I THREW THE TRAY,
AND IT HIT SHINAKO ON THE HEAD.
I'M GOING TO HAVE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS.
DETECTIVE.
SHE MIGHT NEED TO GIVE BLOOD.
WILL YOU LET HER COME WITH US?
IF THAT'S THE CASE,
THEN I'LL GO TO THE HOSPITAL WITH YOU.
ME TOO.
WHAT?! WHY ARE YOU GOING?
BE-CAUSE,

談話室

SIGN: LOUNGE

Ugh
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR ANGLE IS.

SO YOU HID
THE FACT THAT YOU WERE TRIPLETS.
AND THEN A MONTH AGO,

YES.

One of the Shinako-sans,
gave us the whole story.
ONE OF YOU DIED.

A month ago,
the Shinako who was eating the doll's food died.
...POI-SON?
...WHY?
And then,
SFX:OPEN
Ine-san saw the scene.

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大きな事件を扱った3巻でしたが、次巻は九十九夜町に戻っておなじみの人たちも登場する予定です。またお会いできますように。

■ご意見・ご感想などありましたらこちらまで。

〒101-0063
東京都千代田区
神田淡路町2-2-2
白泉社
別冊花とゆめ編集部
都戸利津

"The bath is in the main house, isn't it?"
Ine-san made a duplicate key.
I THOUGHT I JUST FORGOT TO LOCK IT...
"It was stolen?! Does that mean Ine-san...?"
Was she planning to steal...?
THEN THAT WAS WHAT INE-SAN USED.
SFX: OPEN
And saw it.
At that time Ine-san was calling out, but no one was answering, so she came in.
INE-SAN!
INE-SAN?
WHAT DID YOU DO...?
I ... PUT IT IN ...

INE-SAN PUT POISON ...?!
SHI-NAKO.
WAIT... YOU MEAN WE'LL LET OUTSIDERS COME IN?!
LET'S JUST PRETEND IT'S A DOLL.
I'M SURE SOMEONE WILL COME IN HERE.
LET'S PUT A DOLL ON THE GROUND.
AND SAY THAT INE-SAN WAS JUST SEEING THINGS.
QUICK!
THE POLICE WILL PRO-BABLY COME!
So they put a doll in her place.
And they both carried the dead Shinako to the under-ground cabin.
SHINAKO WENT BACK TO THE DOLL'S ROOM,
AND SHOWED THE DETECTIVES THAT IT WAS JUST A DOLL THAT COL-LAPSED.
Then, they stayed there.
SFX: CLATTER
SO THAT MEANS ...
THERE'S A DEAD BODY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT WALL?!

NO!!
SO THEN YOU KILLED THE OTHER ONE,
MAKING YOU THE ONLY DAUGHTER LEFT?
WHAT THE...
THE NEXT DAY AT MIDNIGHT,
WE DUG A HOLE IN THE MOUNTAIN AND BURIED HER.
THIS MORNING...
SHINAKO TOLD ME SHE WANTED TO TELL THE TRUTH.
I WAS THINKING ABOUT IT ALL NIGHT.
Apparently they weren't supposed to switch places throughout the interviews.
I WANT TO TELL HANASAKI-SAN EVERYTHING.
THAT THERE ARE THREE SHINAKOS.
THAT ONE OF US DIED AND WE REPLACED HER WITH A DOLL.
WHAT... ARE YOU SAYING ...?

WHY ARE YOU SAYING THIS?!
YOU CAN'T!
WE'RE ONLY LETTING THAT REPORTER INVESTIGATE SO THAT NO ONE ELSE DOES ANY-MORE!
LAST NIGHT,
I FORGOT TO TELL THEM WHAT TIME BREAKFAST WILL BE SERVED.
SO I WENT BACK TO THE MAIN HOUSE
AND I OVERHEARD THEM TALKING ABOUT MY LIES
"It's going to be bad for Shinako-san."
"If we reveal what she's hiding."
That was my conversation with the detective.
SO I WANT TO TELL HANASAKI-SAN EVERY-THING.
EVEN WHEN I WASN'T THERE,
THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT SUPPORTING US.
I'M SURE THEY'RE GOING TO HELP US.

SHI-NA-KO!
WAI-
KA...
YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND.
WHAT ...?
AH!
WAIT, SHI-NAKO!
IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'VE REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT IT
WHY SHINAKO HAD TO DIE.
WHY WE COULDN'T TELL ANY-ONE
WHY WE'RE PRETENDING TO BE ONE PERSON.
"We still don't know anything."
"Why is she lying to hide it?"
"What is Shinako-san hiding?"
Shoujo Sensei

THAT,
I REALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.
SO I'M GOING TO TELL HER EVERY-THING.
NO!!
SFX STAGGER
SFX: THU
The tray she threw hit her head.
SHI-NAKO..
sinking

Shinako thought she had to hide her.
SHI-NA-KO!
SHI-NA-KO!
Then someone came in.
to make sure there was no blood trail leading to the hidden door.
She was too heavy to carry by herself all the way down.
So she carried her to the underground cabin covered in a kimono
So she went back to the doll's room.
I WANTED TO ASK YOU TO HELP SHINAKO.

BUT I COULDN'T SAY IT.
WHAT'S SO TERRIBLE ABOUT LETTING PEOPLE KNOW?
I DON'T KNOW.
...THEN WHY THE HELL WOULD YOU ALL PRETEND TO BE ONE PERSON?
AND YET YOU'RE BURYING CORPSES AND HIDING THE INJURED?!
WHAT?!
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY YOU'RE DOING IT
SHUT UP! THAT'S WHAT SHE WAS TELLING YOU!!
Shinako-san wasn't lying about not knowing why she's doing this custom.
I WAS SCARED.
WE'VE BEEN PRETENDING TO BE ONE PERSON OUR WHOLE LIVES.
THERE WAS NO MOMENT IN OUR LIVES WHEN WE DIDN'T.
IF WE STOPPED PRETENDING WE WERE ONE PERSON,

SHINAKO-SAN.
She had to protect the custom
because she doesn't know anything else.
I FEARED THAT I WOULD DISAPPEAR.
YES.
I WANT TO KNOW TOO.
AND SEARCH FOR YOUR OLD NURSEMAIDS.
TO ASK THEM ABOUT THIS CUSTOM.
I CAN INVESTIGATE IN YOUR PARENTS' HOMETOWN,
knock
knock
EXCUSE ME,
WE HAVE FINISHED TREATING HER WOUNDS.
"I really don't know anything."
WILL YOU LET ME INVESTIGATE?

THANK YOU!
THAT'S GREAT, SHINAKO-SAN!
SHE'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
IT WAS A LARGE CUT BUT IT WASN'T VERY DEEP.
SHE'LL BE STAYING HERE FOR 2-3 MORE DAYS JUST TO BE SURE
I'M SO HAPPY
OKAY THEN, WE'RE GOING TO THE STATION.
YOU ALL SHOULD GO TOO
BY THE WAY, SHINAKO-SAN.

Shinako-san said it wasn't a suicide or an accident,
"Ine-san's case was probably a suicide or an accident."
That's right.
WHAT DID INE-SAN SEE ON THE SHRINE BY THE WATER-FALLS,
ON THE DAY SHE DIED?
because she knew the real reason.
YOU KNOW WHY INE-SAN DIED,
RIGHT?
!!
THE "SHINAKO" AT THAT TIME WAS SUPPOSED TO BE INSIDE THE MANSION,
ON THAT DAY, I WAS HIDING IN THE UNDER-GROUND CABIN.
BUT I COULDN'T BEAR SEEING SHINAKO'S BODY, SO I WENT TO THE SHRINE.
SO SHE COULDN'T ADMIT THAT ONE OF YOU SAW HER.
BUT NOW YOU CAN TELL US, RIGHT?

I was alone in the shrine,
when I heard Ine-san's voice.
Ine-san?
THEN,
THEY'RE GOING TO GET ME FOR THIS!!
YOU CAN DIE WITHOUT ME!!
SFX: THUMP
THOSE DOLLS IN THE MANSION ARE CURSED! I HAVE TO RETURN THIS!
She was arguing with a man.
IF YOU SELL THIS,
WE'RE GOING TO DIE TOO...!!

I DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS.
DID YOU SEE WHO HE IS?! WHAT KIND OF MAN HE WAS?
DO YOU KNOW HIM?!
SO SHE WAS MUR-DER-ED!!
Ine-san's brother?!
GO GET READY!
OKAY!
THAT MAID'S OLDER BROTHER!
HE'S A THIN MAN. HAS AN OLD MAN'S POSTURE EVEN THOUGH HE DOESN'T LOOK THAT OLD.
HE HAS MESSY GRAY HAIR..
IT'S...
I'll ask him again when she's not here.
This may have something to do with Miyabi-san.
why did the detective keep quiet about Shinako's secret?
BUT WE JUST CAME IN YESTER-DAY?!
WELL, IT'S BEEN A MONTH ALREADY ANYWAY.
After all this,
AND YOU! WHY DIDN'T YOU MENTION THIS SOON-ER?!

THIS WAY.
Someone died, and someone was killed.
KANOKO-KULUN, WE'RE LEAVING.
AND THIS IS YOUR CAR.
That is the truth of the doll house,
where dolls die and kill.
COME, NOW.
OKAY!

That was the last time
I saw Shinako-san as a doll.
After talking to the police,
we took the time to investigate the doll's room and the underground cabin.
So we spent a night at Shibata-san's house.
Bye!

SFX CLUNK 2X
HE'S SOUND ASLEEP.
The next morning, we left the town.
I HAVE TO DECIDE ON WHAT TO DO WITH THIS ARTICLE.
WHILE WE WERE BUSY TRYING TO FIND OUT THE TRUTH,
A BUNCH OF THINGS JUST HAPPENED.
DID THINGS REALLY TURN OUT FOR THE BETTER?
SFX CLUNK
ZZZZZZ
ZZZZZZ
WELL HE DID WORK HARD THIS TIME.

YES, WE EXPOSED SHINAKO-SAN'S SECRET,
BUT THEY WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO HIDE SUCH A SERIOUS INJURY FOR VERY LONG ANYWAY.
IF THIS WAS REVEALED SOONER, NO ONE WOULD HAVE DIED.
WE RESCUED THE INJURED SHINAKO-SAN,
WE FOUND OUT THAT INE-SAN'S CASE WAS A MURDER,
AND WE EVEN FOUND OUT WHO IT WAS!
WE WANTED TO HELP SHINAKO-SAN...
AND THEN ALL THESE THINGS HAPPENED ...
OF COURSE IT'S BETTER!
STOP PUTTING YOUR NOSE WHERE IT DOESN'T BELONG.
He's awake
OR MAYBE .
I'M JUST TRYING TO JUSTIFY ALL THIS TO MYSELF.
KANOKO-KUN HAS THE SPECIAL SKILL OF GOING AROUND IN CIRCLES.
clunk

TEXT OVERWHELMED BY FORCE
勢いで押す!!
WOULD IT BE BETTER IF WE JUST DID THE INTERVIEWS THEN CLAIM THE PAY FOR OUR RENT?!
WOULD YOU HAVE PREFERRED IF WE DIDN'T INVESTIGATE AT ALL AND LEFT SHINAKO-SAN THERE TO FEND FOR HERSELF?!
TO LEAVE SHINAKO-SAN THERE WITHOUT KNOWING SHE WAS INJURED AND DYING?!
SHE'LL TAKE TERRIBLE THINGS ABOUT A CLIENT AND MAKE IT HER PROBLEM AND FEEL BAD ABOUT IT THE WHOLE TIME.
HELPING OUT WAY TOO MUCH.
Going in circles?
AND NOW WHAT...
RIGHT.
My muscles hurt
IF YOU JUST BELIEVE THAT YOU DID THE RIGHT THING EVEN ONCE IN A WHILE,
Not knowing
NO,
IT WOULDN'T.
EEP!
ANSWER ME!!

SFX YAAWN
but he never said anything about Shinako-san's secret until we found out.
THINGS DID TURN OUT BETTER.
The detective wasn't lying.
tonk tonk
YOU'LL LEARN TO ACCEPT THE OUTCOME.

WHY SOUMA-KUN KEPT QUIET ABOUT SHINAKO-SAN BEING THREE PEOPLE,
EVEN THOUGH HE FOUND IT OUT EARLY.
what
!

I'm going back to sleep
Was that because he thought that not revealing it was the right choice?

I GET IT NOW.
"Kanoko-kun is hell bent on supporting Shinako-san."
"I feel bad for her."
SFX CLUNK

"If we can get properly investigated and have an article written about it, it would deflate the mystery."
IN OTHER WORDS, SHINAKO-SAN HAD SHADY SECRETS,
THE REASON WHY SHINAKO-SAN WANTED TO BURY THOSE RUMORS ABOUT THE DOLL MANSION, WAS BECAUSE SHE DIDN'T WANT PEOPLE BRINGING OUT HER SECRETS.
nod
That's probably right...
I WANT MY RENT.
That wasn't a lie.
I THOUGHT IT WAS BECAUSE HE JUST WANTED TO GET IT OVER WITH AND GET HIS PAY.
KANOKO-KUN
ISN'T THE KIND OF PERSON WHO CAN BALANCE KINDNESS AND SKEPTICISM.
And I can, eh?
SFX: CLUNK
WELL...
Huh?
AND SOUMA-KUN DIDN'T WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT IT.
SFX: CLUNK
AND THAT INE-SAN LET SOMEONE DIE,
EVEN IF I PROVE THAT SHINAKO-SAN WERE THREE PEOPLE,
AT FIRST I ALSO THOUGHT THAT INE-SAN'S DEATH WAS A SUICIDE OR AN ACCIDENT.
The detective didn't say anything...

"Maybe we can stop people's suspicions!"
Because I wanted to support Shinako-san
and he didn't want to hurt me...?
Then...
There's no need to hurt her feelings.
IT BENEFITS NO ONE.
What does that make me as a detective's assistant...?!
HOPE-LESS
IDIOT
USE-LESS
A HIN-DRANCE
TOO SUP-POR-TIVE
THAT'S IT!
That's what?
Sorry!

"You know how Ine-san died, don't you?"
BUT YOU ALSO DIDN'T KNOW THAT INE-SAN'S DEATH WASN'T A SUICIDE OR AN ACCIDENT.
AND YOU DIDN'T KNOW WHY THE SHINAKO-SAN THAT WE INITIALLY MET,
AND THE SHINAKO-SAN THE NEXT DAY WERE DIFFERENT PEOPLE.
"That wasn't the Shinako-san from yesterday."
AS ALWAYS, SOUMA-KUN'S INSIGHT AND REASONING WERE INCREDIBLE.
Yep.
Thanks.
SO HOW DID YOU EVENTUALLY FIND OUT?
because of my power.
clunk
"Ine-san's case was probably a suicide or an accident" were lies, right?
were
AM I RIGHT?
Those
THAT'S,
"Lies."
"Yes, I did."
"You ate with us last night, didn't you?"

SFX: CLUNK

SFX: CLUNK